

# War of the Words:

## Public Comment at Open Meetings

(aka “How to Navigate the Stifle-Your-Laugh School Board Challenge”)

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An illustration of a man in a dark blue suit and white shirt standing at a wooden podium, gesturing with his right hand. Behind him are two flagpoles; the left one has a blue flag and the right one has a yellow flag. The background is a light beige color with horizontal lines.

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# Public Comment:

## The Karen Show

An illustration of a woman with blonde hair, wearing a dark suit and a red pin, standing at a wooden podium and speaking into a microphone. The background is a light beige color with horizontal lines.

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# This presentation is NOT about...

01

**First Amendment**

You can't say that in the middle of a school board meeting!!!

02

**Transgenderism**

Which kid uses which bathroom and locker room?!?

03

**Porn in the Library**

*All Lawn Boys Aren't The Bluest Eye* is an objectively lousy read anyway.

04

**Football Win-Loss Records**

This is Texas, so yes, it actually matters to someone attending your meeting.

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# ...and this presentation is ALL about...

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## Public Comment Basics



### Mandatory

Must a school board hear public comments at every meeting? How many, or for how long?



### Boundaries

How can a school board control the course of public comments at a meeting?



### Challenges

How can a school board respond to matters presented during public comment?

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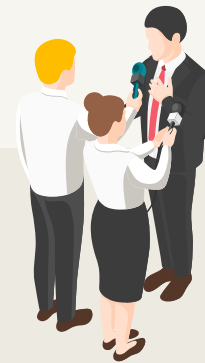
## The Very Basics: Texas Open Meetings Act

The public's right to comment at an open meeting arises under the Texas Open Meetings Act.  
TEXAS GOV'T CODE Chapter 551, and specifically, § 551.007.

### **IMPORTANT FREE RESOURCE:**

Get the OAG's Handbook!

[https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/sites/default/files/files/divisions/open-government/openmeetings\\_hb.pdf](https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/sites/default/files/files/divisions/open-government/openmeetings_hb.pdf)



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[Hot Button Issues for School Boards](#)

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"War of the Words: Public Comment at Open Meetings"